

honor is great, the work is temporary.” This is true for many of us here today. This peaceful transfer of power is one of the hallmarks of a true democracy, and ensuring that this transition is as smooth as possible is a priority for the rest of my Presidency. We face economic challenges that will not pause to let a new President settle in. This will also be America’s first wartime Presidential transition in four decades. We’re in a struggle against violent extremists determined to attack us, and they would like nothing more than to exploit this period of change to harm the American people.

So over the next 75 days, all of us must ensure that the next President and his team can hit the ground running. For more than a year now, departments and agencies throughout the Federal Government have been preparing for a smooth transition. We’ve provided intelligence briefings to the President-elect, and the Department of Justice has approved security clearances for members of his transition team. In the coming weeks, we will ask administration officials to brief the Obama team on ongoing policy issues, ranging from the financial markets to the war in Iraq. I look forward to discussing those issues with the President-elect early next week.

Offices within the White House are at work preparing extensive transition materials. We’re preparing career employees throughout the administration to take on added responsibilities to help prevent any disruption to the essential functions of the Federal Government.

Taken together, these measures represent an unprecedented effort to ensure that the executive branch is prepared to fulfill its responsibilities at all times. As we carry out this transition, I know that you will continue to conduct yourselves with the decency and professionalism you have shown throughout my time in office.

Successful transition is just one of the many important tasks remaining in our last 75 days. To help address the global financial crisis, the Secretary of Treasury is working endless hours, and I will host an international summit here in Washington on November the 15th. This will be an historic meeting,

and I’m confident that you will work hard to help make it a success.

We’ll also keep urging Congress to approve America’s free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. And we will continue to protect this homeland by defeating the terrorists and extremists abroad, so we do not have to face them here at home.

As January 20th draws near, some of you may be anxious about finding a new job or a new place to live. I know how you feel. [Laughter] But between now and then, we must keep our attention on the task at hand, because the American people expect no less. Earlier this year, I promised that I would sprint to the finish. I am keeping that promise, and I know I have given some of you a good workout along the way. As we head into the final stretch, I ask you to remain focused on the goals ahead. I will be honored to stand with you at the finish line. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the National Economy

November 7, 2008

Today we received monthly job report numbers that reflect the difficult challenges confronting our economy. We are in the midst of a global financial crisis, and tight credit markets have made it harder for businesses to borrow the money they need to meet their payrolls, grow, and create new jobs.

The Federal Government has taken aggressive and decisive measures to address this situation. It will take time for these measures to have their full impact on an economy in which many Americans are struggling. But in recent days, we have seen some encouraging signs. The market for lending between banks has loosened considerably, and the Federal Reserve’s efforts to stabilize the commercial paper market have provided businesses with an urgently needed source of financing for day-to-day operations.

In the weeks ahead, my administration will continue working to return our economy to the path of prosperity and growth. I will continue urging Members of Congress to approve free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea, and I look forward to hosting an international financial summit with leaders of both developed and developing nations on November 15.

I understand that Americans remain deeply concerned about the challenges facing our economy, but our economy has overcome great challenges before, and we can be confident that it will do so again.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Proclamation 8318—World Freedom Day, 2008

November 7, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On World Freedom Day, we celebrate the anniversary of the historic fall of the Berlin Wall and honor the brave citizens of East and West Germany who helped secure freedom and liberty for future generations.

The Berlin Wall stood as a barrier that isolated the victims of imperial Communism and totalitarian power from the promise of the free world. Standing in the presence of the wall, with an unshakable belief in the power of liberty, President Ronald Reagan issued a resounding challenge on behalf of the free and the unfree alike: “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.” On November 9, 1989, the citizens of East Germany finally triumphed over their Communist oppressors, and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down. As the hope of freedom spread, the Soviet empire collapsed, the Iron Curtain was lifted, and Eastern and Central Europe were liberated from decades of cruel tyranny.

The Cold War demonstrated once again that freedom is precious and cannot be taken for granted, that evil is real and must be confronted, and that if they are allowed to do so, harsh rulers will subjugate others in the name of hateful ideologies. History has also

proven that the transformative power of liberty overcomes this oppression. Today, many former Communist countries are using their sovereignty to aid the rise of other young democracies and to shine the light of conscience on human rights abuses. Our belief in the universality of freedom is challenged time and again, but we continue to go forward with confidence that free nations will always prevail over the enemies of liberty, peace, and justice.

On World Freedom Day, we are reminded that injustice overseas can threaten our way of life at home, and we renew our commitment to helping those who suffer under the weight of oppression.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 9, 2008, as World Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, reaffirming our dedication to freedom and democracy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 10, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 12.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President’s public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

November 1

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.